

Hello to all students in third period ~

I'm returning to the initial problem statement that we formulated as a class to guide our reading and research. I thought I'd update you on what we've done so far and map out what we will be doing in coming weeks.

Here's the problem again, to refresh your memory:

**The Problem: It's hard to know exactly how the world around us shapes our perceptions of ourselves. What shapes the way a person sees him/herself? How do other people's prejudices affect how we perceive our identities? How does the history of our people shape us as individuals? How can we begin to deconstruct our own identities?**

Are these questions starting to make more sense to you after you've read *ABC* or *Maus*?

This week you will be expected to procure a copy of either *ABC* or *Maus*, depending on which one you haven't read yet. You need to finish reading by Wednesday, November 19th.

After you finish reading, we will have time in class to discuss both books and dig a little more deeply into the texts using both small group and whole class discussions.

In the meantime, recall the question that you selected as your responsibility? (I've pasted them in the bottom of this doc to jog your memory). You will be expected to conduct some sort of research on this question. You should be ready to tell me what your plan will be for research, perhaps you want to read previous studies, create and give a survey, interview an individual. Begin thinking about what this will look like. You will need to hand in your research and present your findings to your classmates.

1. **Identify your method of research** this will include reading both *ABC* and *Maus I and II* - but needs to include another source. Some time will be allowed in class for this research, but much of it will be done on your own time so choose something you enjoy doing. If you love crawling the web looking for interesting articles in science journals, then select that. However, if you love talking to people, then maybe a survey or series of interviews would be better for you.
2. **Identify the potential learning challenge** for each method of research. For instance, if you select surveying statistics, but you don't know how to read graphs, then reading graphs would be the learning challenge. If you are going to conduct interviews, then perhaps designing good interview questions is your learning challenge. Each method of research will have some learning challenge associated with it or it may have more than one, write them down.

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**Questions:**

**why** is it so hard to change minds when what they think is wrong or unfair?

or

**who** gets to decide what is right and fair, and how can it be enforced?

**why** can't we forget all the sad memories of the past?

or

**why** is it important to remember?

**why** do people keep mentioning racism even though it's not a big problem anymore?

or

**is** racism still a big problem?

**if** people who are being bullied fight back, would the bullying stop?

**if** you hang out with white people, does that make you white, even if you're not?

or

**can** you separate your identity from the color of your skin or your racial/ethnic identity?

**how** am I affected by racism in my life?

or

**what** are my attitudes and assumptions about others and what are their's about me?

**how** do other's expectations of me - based on my race and/or style - affect the way I see myself?

**how** does the power of large groups (like the Nazis) or anonymity (like the KKK or on-line "flaming") change a person's behavior?